Ministry of Government Relations

Plan for 2014-15

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Government of Saskatchewan

Statement from the Minister

I am pleased to present the Ministry of Government Relations' Plan for 2014-15. The Government's Direction and Budget for 2014-15 are built on the principle of *Steady Growth* to support a continued focus on sound economic growth and shared prosperity.

Government Relations works with a diverse range of partners. By working together we can most effectively respond to the challenges of growth, promote economic opportunity, and enhance the quality of life for all our residents.

Government Relations will report on progress made toward this Plan in the 2014-15 Annual Report.

The Honourable Jim Reiter
Minister of Government Relations
Minister Responsible for First Nations, Métis and Northern Affairs

Government of Saskatchewan

Response to Government Direction

The Government is committed to establishing Saskatchewan as the best place to live, work and raise a family.

In October 2013, the first progress report on the *Saskatchewan Plan for Growth – Vision 2020 and Beyond* was released. Saskatchewan's growth is strong and steady. As Saskatchewan continues to move forward, the Government will support growth in 2014-15 through investing in people and needed infrastructure, encouraging economic growth, and through sound policy and financial decisions.

Saskatchewan's Vision

"... to be the best place in Canada – to live, to work, to start a business, to get an education, to raise a family and to build a life."

Sustained growth and opportunities for Saskatchewan people	**Meeting the challenges of growth**	**Securing a better quality of life for all Saskatchewan people**	**Delivering responsive and responsible government**

Government's vision and four goals provide the framework for ministries, agencies and third parties to align their programs and services to these priorities and meet the needs of Saskatchewan's citizens.

All ministries and agencies will report on progress in their 2014-15 annual reports. This supports Government's commitment to keep its promises and ensures greater transparency and accountability to the people of Saskatchewan.

Mission, Strategies and Actions

Mandate Statement

With responsibility for municipal relations, public safety, and First Nations, Métis and northern affairs, the Ministry actively engages a diverse range of partners and stakeholders to: effectively plan for and respond to the opportunities and challenges of growth; provide leadership and direction so that integrated public safety services are available to communities and their residents; and support responsive and responsible government.

Strategy

Build relationships and develop partnerships with and between municipalities, First Nations and Métis communities, and industry that advance the Government's Growth Agenda

Key Actions

- Work with partners on a long-term, predictable, and sustainable approach to municipal infrastructure by:
  - ensuring existing programs are concluded effectively and efficiently;
  - continuing negotiations regarding the New Building Canada Plan, including the renewed Gas Tax Fund and New Building Canada Fund; and,
  - identifying categories of priority and/or strategic infrastructure investments for the future.
- Support the Saskatchewan Plan for Growth by:
  - utilizing the multi-ministry Rapid Growth Communities working group to provide an improved government response to assist areas experiencing rapid growth;
  - developing criteria to determine future areas to assist;
  - developing guidelines on fair and equitable annexation compensation; and,
  - developing a "growth readiness" guide and tool for communities to use when identifying and prioritizing actions on growth pressures.
- Maintain the revenue sharing commitment, that grows with the province's economy, providing the equivalent of one full point of the Provincial Sales Tax (from 2012-13 Public Accounts) to the municipal sector.
- Develop tools/training materials and participate in special projects designed to increase the municipal sector's ability to undertake local and regional planning, with a particular focus on areas around the province's larger centres.
- Ensure legislation, regulations, and policies are in alignment with the Ministry's commitment to be an effective partner in supporting growth, to enhance the quality of life for Saskatchewan people, and to act in the interests of residents, communities, and municipalities.
- Support dialogue and collaboration among communities, industry, and government in northern resource development decisions, including the Northern Saskatchewan Environmental Quality Committee's focus on the uranium industry.
- Negotiate and administer mine surface lease agreements to enable and encourage maximum training, employment, and business opportunities for Northerners.
- Raise awareness of resource industry impacts on northern communities by reporting on annual mining benefits and industry-community agreements in Canada's North.

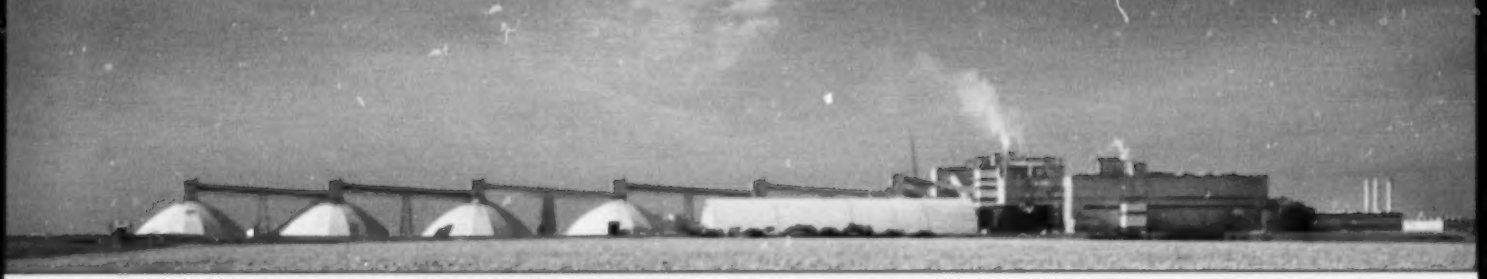


Photo Credit: Enterprise Saskatchewan, Greg Huszar Photography, Mosaic Belle Plaine site

- Undertake public safety reform to develop and maintain a modern, effective regulatory system that will:
  - ensure timely adoption of codes and standards in all public safety technologies through effective regulations;
  - align and simplify legislation and regulations pertaining to public safety; and,
  - enable collaboration between government, industry, and municipalities in the delivery, application, and compliance with numerous public safety technologies.
- Work with First Nations, Métis, and other stakeholders to advance shared policy objectives and practical arrangements that improve outcomes for First Nations and Métis people.

Strategy

Be an enabling partner in building safe, healthy and vibrant communities

Key Actions

- Maintain a robust Provincial Emergency Plan that identifies the roles and responsibilities of all ministries, Crowns, and agencies in provincial emergency operations under the Incident Command System.
- Manage provincial resources to support municipalities facing emergency situations through the delivery of preparedness, mitigation, response, and recovery initiatives that complement local and regional capabilities.
- Develop a program to enhance internal capacity to assist municipalities, when required, during emergencies.
- Support greater public safety in Saskatchewan communities by reviewing municipal emergency plans against established criteria and advising on potential improvements.
- Develop emerging public safety infrastructure to support community emergency services and ensure interoperability among all public safety agencies.
- Maintain and improve provincial emergency communications systems, such as the Sask911 system and the Provincial Public Safety Telecommunications Network, including technology enhancements to improve portable radio coverage and network resiliency.
- Provide an effective disaster financial assistance program that meets the critical needs of those impacted by natural disasters and maximizes cost recovery under the federal Disaster Financial Assistance Arrangements.
- Continue implementation of lessons learned from the 2013 Lean initiative to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the Provincial Disaster Assistance Program.
- Initiate work on a provincial disaster mitigation strategy.
- Work with Public Safety Canada on development and implementation of its recently announced Natural Disaster Mitigation Strategy.
- Administer the final year of the Seniors Home Security Program.
- Work with the municipal sector and its associations to:
  - develop a range of options and alternative approaches for improved infrastructure policies and best practices that are locally driven and based on meaningful priorities set by the local council; and,
  - develop and deliver, as appropriate, training opportunities and resources related to community planning, leadership, and other topics where a mutual priority is identified.
- Work with ministries, agencies, and Crowns to engage First Nations and Métis, municipalities, and other stakeholders to provide policy advice and support on integrated approaches across Government priorities.

Photo Credit: Ministry of Environment

Strategy

Support responsive and responsible government

Key Actions

- Ensure an effective and efficient property assessment and taxation system exists in the province to fund education and municipal services.
- Support government's and municipalities' business needs by providing information to improve analytical and decision-making capabilities.
- Review and improve municipal and public safety legislation and regulations to meet the evolving needs of municipal, public safety and other stakeholders, the province and the public to ensure it achieves responsive and responsible government.
  - Advance development of amendments to *The Local Government Election Act*.
- Facilitate consistent implementation of the *First Nation and Métis Consultation Policy Framework* to ensure duty to consult objectives and obligations are met and First Nation and Métis relationships are strengthened.
- Manage and increase awareness of the *First Nations and Métis Consultation Participation Fund*.
- Coordinate and oversee the implementation of Treaty Land Entitlement (TLE) and Specific Claims Agreements to ensure provincial obligations are met and lead provincial involvement in negotiations of TLE claims with Canada and First Nations.

Strategy

Improve the effectiveness and efficiency of Ministry programs and services

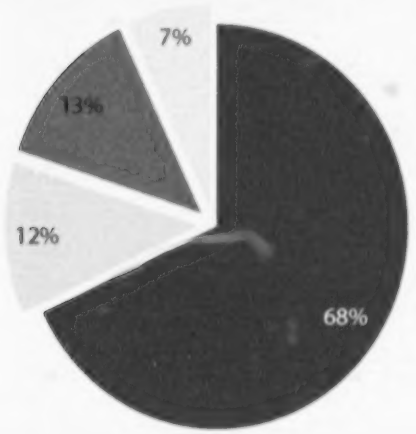
Key Actions

- Conduct program reviews to evaluate alignment with the Ministry's strategic framework and assess effectiveness and efficiency of all programs.
- Continue to grow the Ministry's Lean culture and use Lean tools to streamline processes.
- Complete the Ministry's review of the Saskatchewan Municipal Board and make recommendations as appropriate.

Performance Measures

Measure

Percentage of the Population Living in Municipalities With or Without Official Community Plans

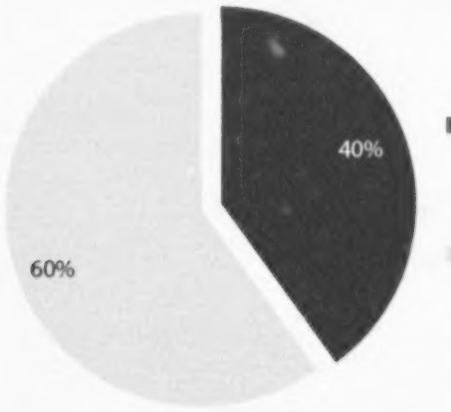


	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
Urban Municipalities with Plans	63%	66%	68%	68%
Urban Municipalities without Plans	18%	15%	13%	12%
Rural Municipalities with Plans	12%	12%	12%	13%
Rural Municipalities without Plans	7%	7%	7%	7%

Source: Ministry of Government Relations– Community Planning

Measure

Percentage of Municipalities With or Without Official Community Plans



	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
Percentage of Municipalities with Plans	36%	38%	40%	40%
Percentage of Municipalities without Plans	64%	62%	60%	60%

Source: Ministry of Government Relations– Community Planning

Photo Credit: Tourism Saskatoon, City of Bridges

Measure Description

Planning is voluntary in Saskatchewan, meaning municipalities can choose whether or not to adopt an Official Community Plan (OCP). As depicted in the tables presented, 40% of Saskatchewan's municipalities, covering 81% of the province's population, have chosen to adopt an OCP. This represents a 4% increase in the percentage of municipalities with an OCP and a 6% increase in the percentage of the population living in a municipality with an OCP from 2009-10. These figures have increased as larger urban municipalities and rural municipalities experiencing rapid growth are recognizing the need to plan and manage their growth through an OCP.

Municipalities with OCPs have an established plan for the growth and sustainability for their community. OCPs give municipalities the authority to facilitate new development opportunities and to achieve cost effective and efficient services in order to improve the quality of life for their citizens. Economic growth in Saskatchewan has amplified the need for capable municipalities to implement OCPs in order to respond to the increasing demands for residential and commercial lots, expanded infrastructure, and servicing to support community expectations and needs.

OCPs set out municipal policies to create certainty and consistency in community development for residents and businesses. These policies include the community's direction for current and future economic development, housing availability, recreational services, provision of public works, management of environmentally sensitive lands, source water protection and inter-municipal cooperation. These policies also reduce the many risks or costs associated with development by setting out direction for the efficient use of infrastructure and the avoidance of natural hazards, such as flooding or slope instability. Municipalities without OCPs do not have the policies for responsible development in place resulting in ad-hoc growth, the inefficient use of existing infrastructure, further burdening the taxpayer, and an increased risk of development occurring in hazard areas.

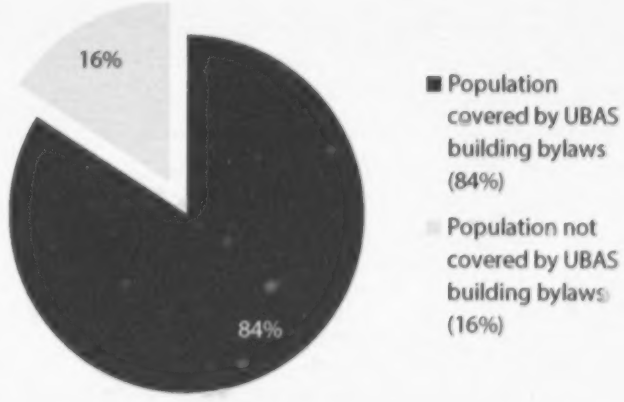
Providing support to municipalities in their development and to help manage land use and risk, the Ministry:

- encourages municipalities to adopt OCPs, zoning bylaws and to pursue regional cooperation as a means to facilitate new development opportunities and meet any challenges associated with growth;
- provides planning advice and support to municipalities;
- reviews and approves municipal planning and zoning bylaws to ensure consistency with legislation and provincial interests;
- promotes the development of OCPs and zoning bylaws when ranking municipal infrastructure funding projects;
- clarifies and coordinates provincial priorities for land use and development through the Statements of Provincial Interest;
- forges links with other ministries to incorporate municipal land use planning objectives into their initiatives;
- facilitates the development of local and regional capacity through education and training;
- develops consultation processes; and,
- fosters relationships with First Nations and Métis communities.

Photo Credit: Tourism Saskatchewan, Greg Huszar Photography, Over the Hill Orchards

Measure

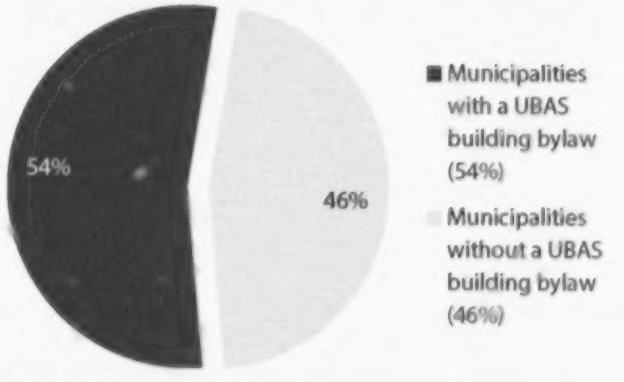
Percentage of population covered by *The Uniform Building and Accessibility Standards Act* (UBAS) building bylaws



Source: Ministry of Government Relations – Community Planning

Measure

Percentage of municipalities with a building bylaw pursuant to UBAS



Source: Ministry of Government Relations – Community Planning

Photo Credit: Tourism Saskatchewan, Greg Huszar Photography, Jones Peak, near Eastend

Measure Description

Government Relations undertakes significant inter-ministry and agency coordination to facilitate the incorporation of government priorities and interests within local government. This coordination includes:

- safeguarding public health and safety;
- ensuring the integrity of public infrastructure;
- preserving natural, cultural, and archaeological resources;
- protecting the environment, including water; and,
- encouraging the sustainable development of communities.

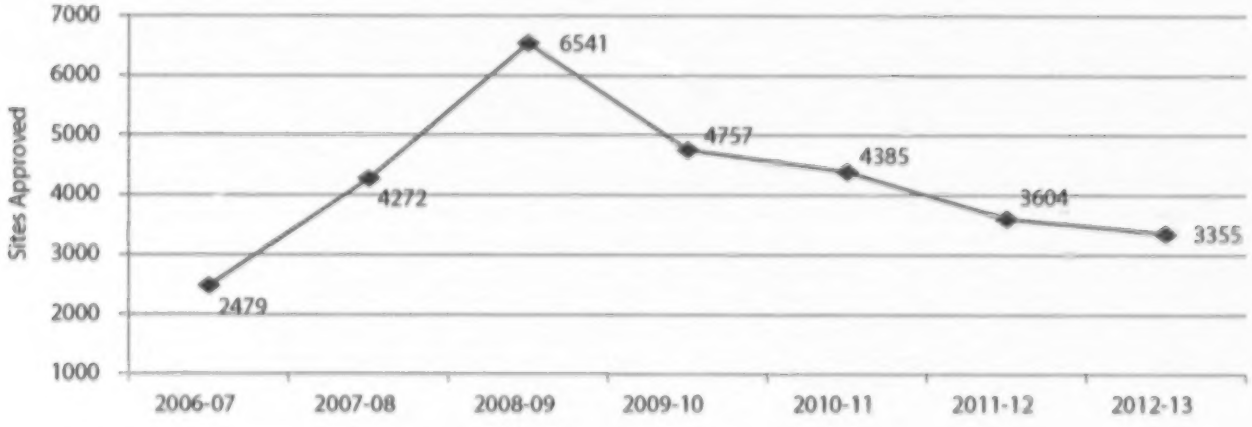
This measure demonstrates municipal leadership in providing public safety through the adoption of building bylaws pursuant to *The Uniform Building and Accessibility Standards Act* (UBAS) and enforcement of building standards that promote construction of safe buildings. As of March 31, 2013, 425 (54%) municipalities had UBAS approved building bylaws in place, while 361 of 786 (46%) municipalities were without a UBAS building bylaw pursuant to the Act. Municipalities with building bylaws in place represent 84% of the province's population (based on the 2011 Census), not including reserve populations. Inspections on reserves where the National Building Code is utilized are conducted by First Nations building officials.

Ongoing and developing efforts and initiatives by the Ministry, as well as inter-ministry and agency co-ordination, will increase the implementation of UBAS building bylaws by municipalities. Inter-jurisdictional planning provides a means of building municipal planning capacity and developing Official Community Plans and building bylaws. Government Relations is working with municipalities to enhance inter-jurisdictional opportunities through the Municipal Capacity Development Program and assisting communities interested in working together through district planning initiatives.

Photo Credit: Tourism Saskatoon, Broadway Bridge

Measure

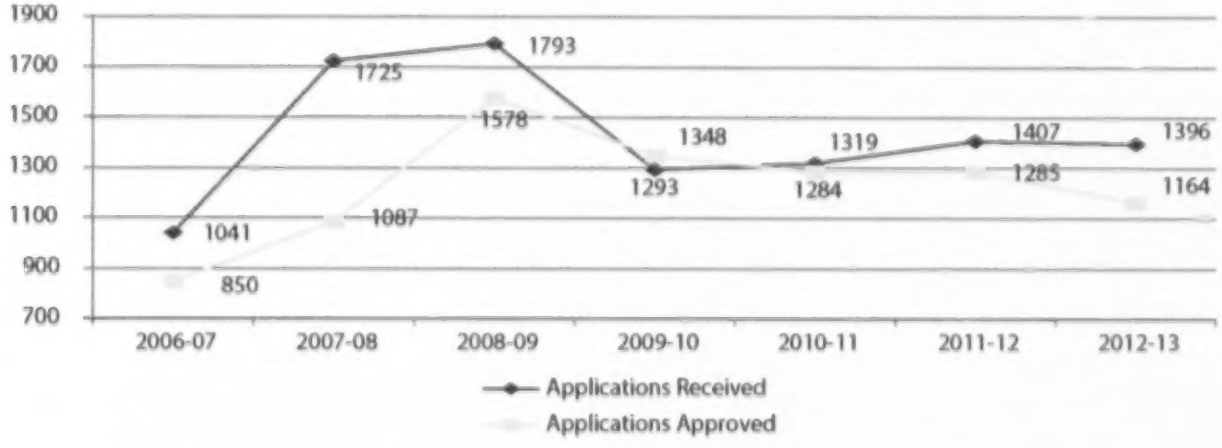
Number of sites approved through subdivision approval process



Source: Ministry of Government Relations – Community Planning

Measure

Number of subdivision applications received and approved



Source: Ministry of Government Relations – Community Planning

Photo Credit: Ministry of Parks, Culture and Sport, photo by Paul Austring, Duck Mountain

Measure Description

The subdivision approval process ensures site suitability and appropriate servicing of the intended residential, commercial, and industrial development. The subdivision of land is a key step for investment in economic growth as it is one of the first steps in the development process. Using integrated community development approaches, Government Relations reviews applications to subdivide land to ensure compliance with federal, provincial, and municipal regulations and provides direction and assistance to municipalities and developers.

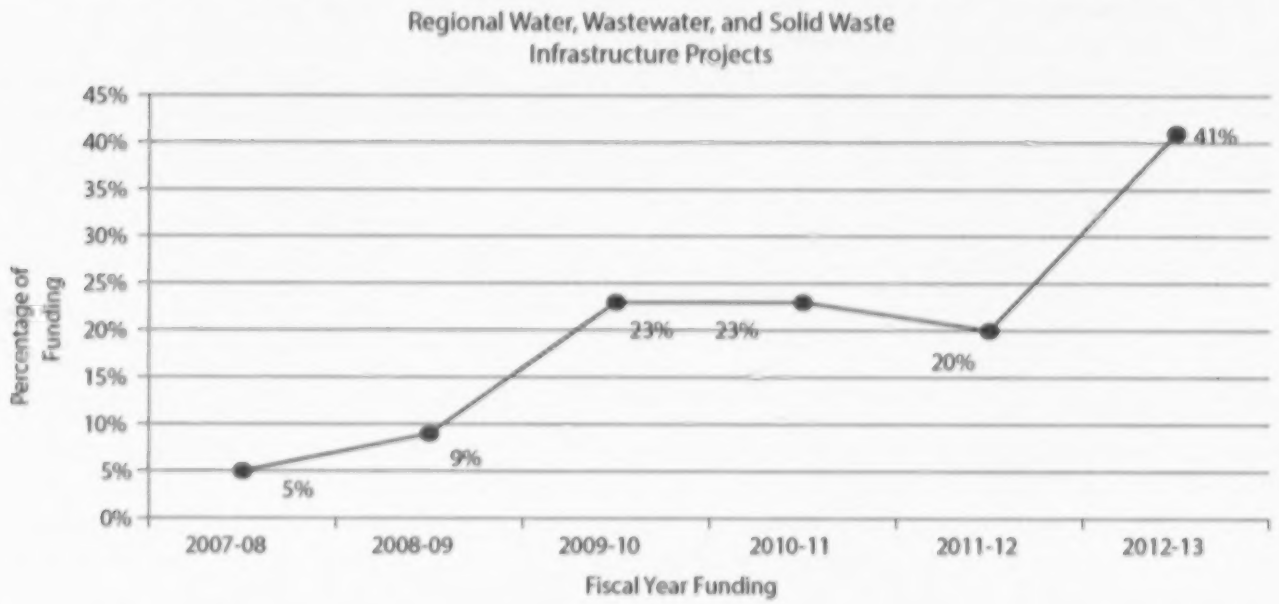
In 2013-14, Government Relations is projected to receive 1,376 subdivision applications and approve 1,150 applications, resulting in the creation of 3,300 sites. Projections for 2014-15 indicate a sustained high level of activity with a slight decrease in the demand for new subdivisions as the market picks up the development of previously approved sites.

Facilitating subdivisions supports the province's goals of a prosperous economy and sustaining growth and opportunities for Saskatchewan people. The high demand for lot development in the past several years represents significant investment in land and property within the province and places demands for new infrastructure to service the sites created. In order to advance provincial priorities for land development, including promoting economic development, supporting social and cultural development, and establishing sustainable and viable communities, Government Relations continues to work collaboratively with municipalities through the integrated subdivision approval process to overcome the challenges of growth. This includes continuing to provide assistance and advice on development and infrastructure limitations which can compromise public and private investment, and both regional and local community growth.

Photo Credit: Ministry of Parks, Culture and Sport, Greg Huszar Photography, Elbow Marina

Measure

Percentage of funding provided to communities under 100,000 for regional water, wastewater, and solid waste infrastructure through major federal-provincial cost-shared infrastructure programs (as a percentage of total funding)



Source: Ministry of Government Relations – Municipal Infrastructure and Finance

Measure Description

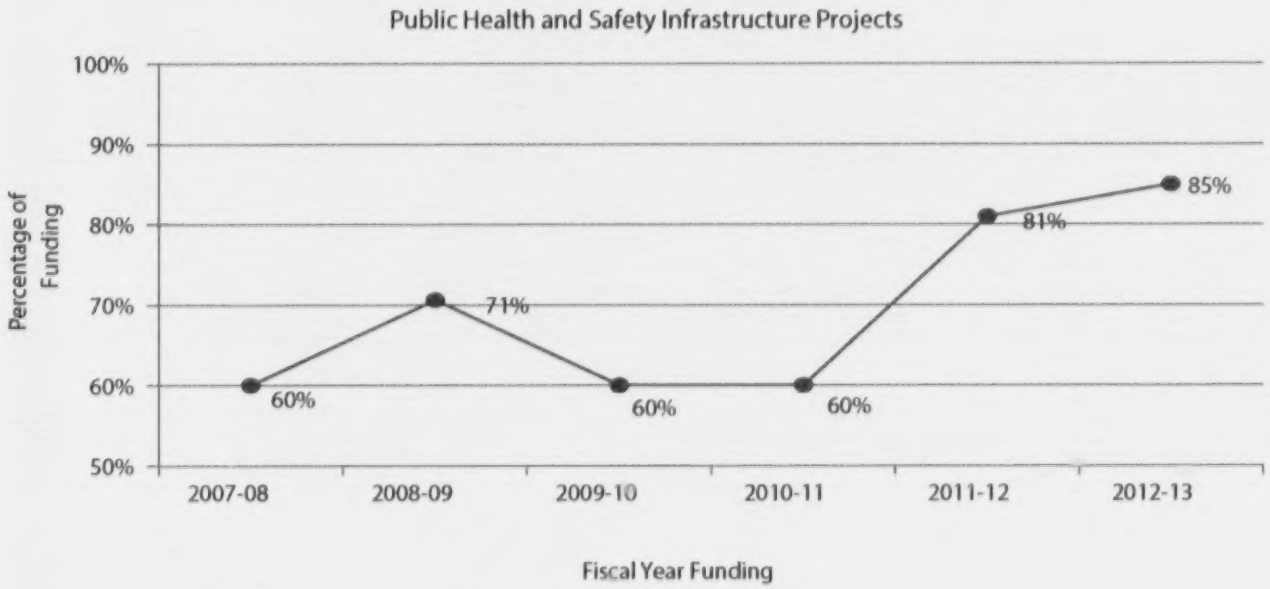
This measure is significant to the Ministry and government as regional solutions often provide an effective and efficient solution to local issues surrounding limited financial resources, increasing municipal infrastructure deficits, and environmental/health disaster risks. This measure tracks the amount of federal/provincial program funding that is provided to communities with populations fewer than 100,000 for regional water, wastewater, and solid waste infrastructure (versus non-regional) as a percentage of total funding provided under those categories.

Over the past four years, significant funding has been committed to regional infrastructure, with the percentage of regional system funding reaching its highest point in 2012-13. Clean water is essential for a high quality of life. In order to provide necessary funding to achieve this, the Province will continue to provide funding for several important regional projects in 2014-15.

Photo Credit: Ministry of Parks, Culture and Sport, Devona Hill Photography, Rolling Pines Golf and Country Resort

Measure

Proportion of infrastructure investment provided for public health and safety projects (water, wastewater, and solid waste projects) through federal-provincial cost-shared programs (as a percentage of total funding)



Source: Ministry of Government Relations – Municipal Infrastructure and Finance

Measure Description

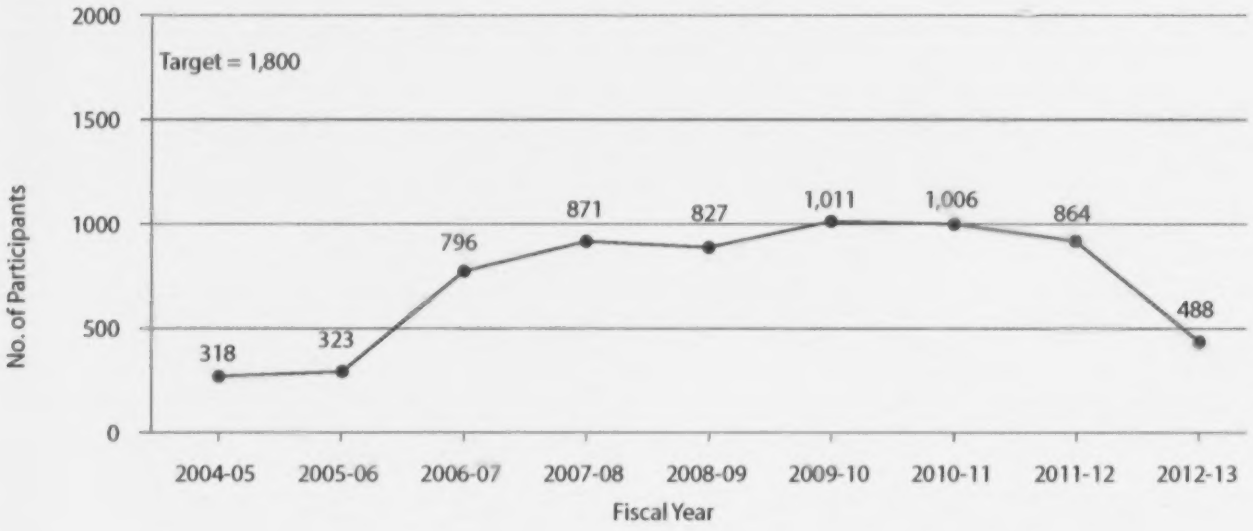
Government investments in health and safety related infrastructure projects promote a better quality of life for Saskatchewan residents and mitigate environmental/health risks. This measure tracks the proportion of federal/ provincial cost-shared program funding provided for water, wastewater, and solid waste projects as a percentage of total funding provided.

Total federal/provincial funding has significantly increased in the past several years. A significant portion of total funding was cash-flowed to public safety projects in the past several years, and in 2012-13 the percentage of funding for public safety projects reached its highest level in eight years. This high percentage is the result of a focus on public safety projects under the Building Canada Fund – Communities Component.

Photo Credit: Ministry of Parks, Culture and Sport, Greg Huszar Photography, Dock Jumpers

Measure

Number of individuals participating in the Emergency Management Training Program



Source: Ministry of Government Relations - Emergency Management and Fire Safety

Measure Description

The Emergency Management Training Program provides training in the core essentials of an Emergency Management Framework through courses such as Basic Emergency Management, Emergency Operations Centre, Evacuation Contingency Planning, and Emergency Public Information.

There is a direct relationship between the number of participants and the level of preparedness at the community level. Municipalities that invest in training and developing their emergency management programs improve overall public safety, are better prepared to respond to disasters within their community, reduce damage to properties and critical infrastructure, and enhance protection of the environment.

The Ministry has a moderate level of influence over this measure as it is a demand-driven system. The Ministry not only establishes targets, it encourages participation, provides training at no cost to the participant, and makes it accessible by delivering the training program to the regions. Ultimately, it is the municipalities that decide on the amount of training they wish to invest in.

Since the program's inception, the number of trained participants has increased from 318 participants in 2004-05 to 1,006 participants in 2010-11, and reduced to 488 in 2012-13. Operational experience has shown that many communities were better prepared for emergency events during the 2013 spring flooding, particularly those communities that experienced flooding in 2011 and 2010 and subsequently undertook mitigation and preparedness work.

Best efforts will continue to ensure that new municipal officials receive emergency management training, through the use of regional Emergency Services Officers and the direct contact they provide between the Ministry and Saskatchewan communities.

Photo Credit: Saskatchewan Watershed Authority, photo by Jim Kroshius, Katepwa Weir

Measure

Number of grants approved through the Consultation Participation Fund for First Nations and Métis communities

Fiscal Year	Total Amount	# of Grants
2012-13	$0.1M	8
2011-12	$0.3M	4
2010-11	$1.7M	16
2009-10	$0.4M	12
2008-09	$2.0M	39
2007-08	$1.1M	20

Source: Ministry of Government Relations – Lands and Consultation

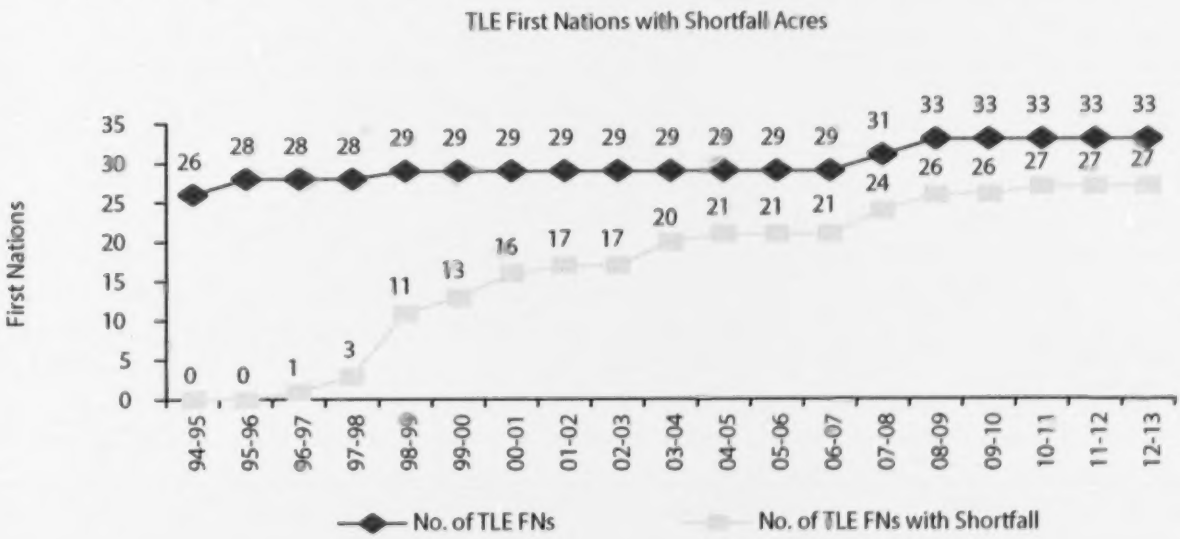
Measure Description

Consistent with government's *First Nation and Métis Consultation Policy Framework*, the *First Nations and Métis Consultation Participation Fund* provides an opportunity for First Nations and Métis communities to apply for funding to support their consultations with government on project specific activities where a duty to consult is triggered.

Photo Credit: Ministry of Parks, Culture and Sport, Hans-Gerhard Pfaff, Saskatchewan Legislative Building

Measure

Treaty Land Entitlement First Nations that have achieved their shortfall acres



Data source: Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada

Measure Description

Government Relations ensures that the provincial obligations with Treaty Land Entitlement (TLE) agreements are met. The shortfall acres are the minimum amount of acres each TLE First Nation must acquire and transfer to reserve status before the outstanding treaty land obligation is met.

This chart shows the number of TLE First Nations who have transferred their shortfall acres to reserve status in relation to the total number of TLE First Nations. As of March 31, 2013, 33 First Nations have signed TLE Settlement Agreements with Canada and Saskatchewan. Of those, 27 have acquired their shortfall acres.

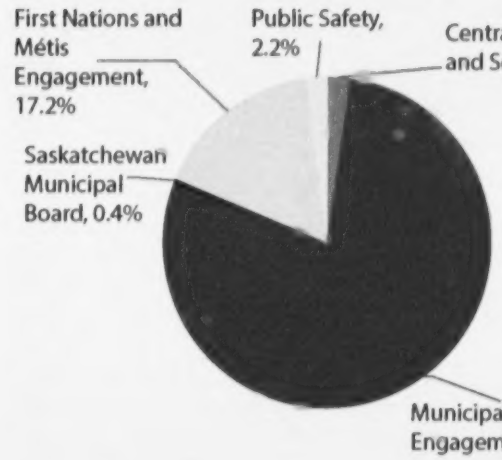
Progress on this measure is a key indicator of the Ministry's success in meeting the provincial obligations related to TLE and contributing to the acquisition of shortfall acres by all TLE First Nations.

Financial Summary

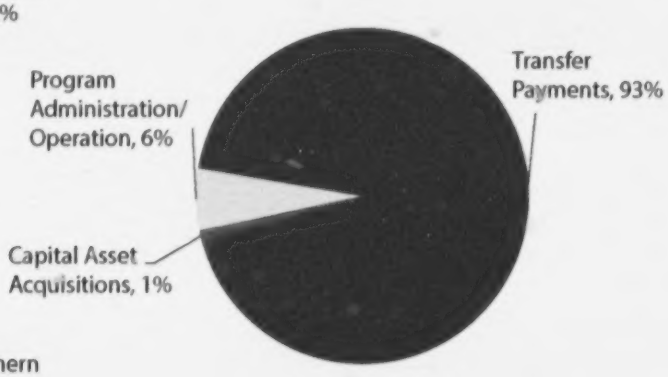
2014-15 Estimates	(In thousands of dollars)
Central Management and Services	10,287
First Nations and Métis Engagement	80,221
Municipal and Northern Engagement	363,815
Saskatchewan Municipal Board	1,753
Public Safety	10,159
Provincial Public Safety Telecommunications Network	---
Total Appropriation	**466,235**
Capital Asset Acquisitions	(2,160)
Non-Appropriated Expense Adjustment	2,583
Total Expense	**466,658**
FTE Staff Complement	**241.1**

For more information, see the Budget Estimates at: http://www.saskatchewan.ca/budget

Ministry Spending by Subvote


First Nations and Métis Engagement, 17.2%
Public Safety, 2.2%
Central Management and Services, 2.2%
Saskatchewan Municipal Board, 0.4%
Municipal and Northern Engagement, 78.0%

Ministry Spending by Classification



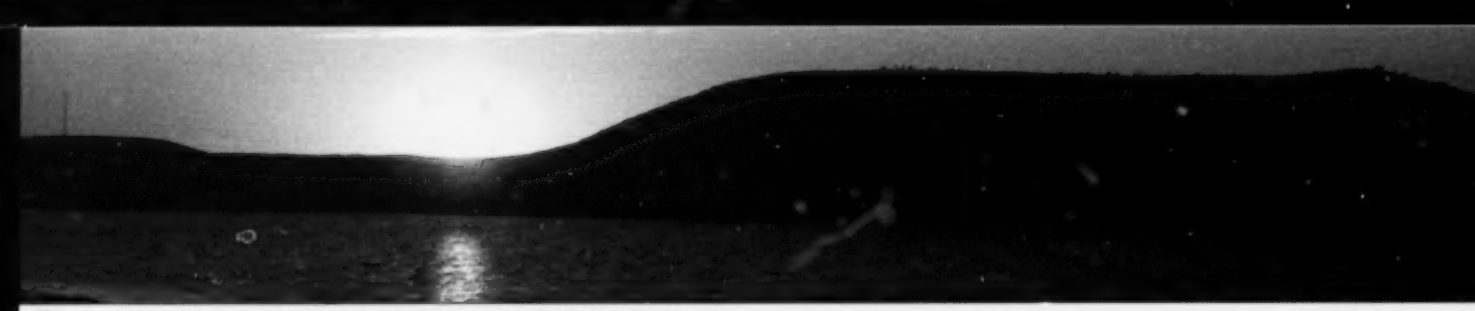


Photo Credit: Saskatchewan Watershed Authority, photo by Vicki East, Rafferty Reservoir

Highlights

The following are key announcements from the Ministry of Government Relations' 2014-15 Budget:

- $257.0 million for municipal revenue sharing funding, consisting of the following:
  - $165.2 million to urban municipalities;
  - $72.6 million to rural municipalities; and,
  - $19.2 million to northern municipalities.
- In addition, $ 73.6 million is provided for municipal infrastructure programs, consisting of:
  - $14.7 million to meet project commitments under various federal-provincial infrastructure programs;
  - $56.3 million in flow-through municipal infrastructure funding provided by the Gas Tax Program; and,
  - $2.6 million to meet program commitments under the Saskatchewan Infrastructure Growth Initiative.

In Public Safety programs, the Budget provides:

- $2.7 million for Provincial Disaster Assistance Program claims and operations;
- $3.9 million for Emergency Management and Fire Safety; and,
- $2.2 million for the provincial contribution to capital upgrades as a partner in the Provincial Public Safety Telecommunications Network.

Partnerships with First Nations:

- $76.6 million, a $3.0 million increase based on casino profit forecasts, for gaming agreement transfers will foster economic and social development in First Nation and Métis communities in Saskatchewan.

For More Information

Please visit the Ministry's website at http://www.saskatchewan.ca/government/ministries/government-relations for more information on the Ministry's programs and services. For additional information about Government Relations, or to provide feedback about our 2014-15 Plan or performance results, please contact us at (306) 798-6093.

Front Page Photo Credits

Canola and flax fields	*Biking, Narrow Hills Provincial Park*	*Over the Hill Orchards*	*Saskatchewan Legislative Building*
Photographer, Charles Melnick	*Greg Huszar Photography*	*Greg Huszar Photography*	*Greg Huszar Photography*